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# Christianity Today

BY WILLIAM PIERSON MERRILL

THIS is a critical time for Christianity. The old hymn is truer today than when it was written nearly a century ago,

> We are living, we are dwelling,
> In a grand and awful time.

One thinks often of the answer of the little fellow in the geography class to the question, "What is the shape of the world?" "My father says it's in the worst shape he ever knew it to be."

Of course we know how easy it is for any age to take itself too seriously. Someone has said that it is altogether likely that, as Adam and Eve were leaving the Garden of Eden, Adam turned to his wife and said: "My dear, do you realize that we are passing through a time of transition, probably more severe than any hitherto known?" Here, as elsewhere, Adam's descendants have followed his example.

Yet thoughtful Christians may well feel justified in the conviction that Christianity today is facing a new world with new problems. "The old order changeth, giving place to new." If that was true for Tennyson in his day, and for King Arthur in his, how much more for this time!

Christianity faces new and critical facts and problems. Large sectors of the world's life are opposing it, or, worse still, leaving it out of account, as negligible. One great nation has practically erased religion as a real factor from its national life, and that on the ground that it is an opiate. Think of that as a description of the religion of one who said, "I came to cast fire on the earth!" Another great nation has served notice on the Christian church that it can continue to exist only as a servant of the state—which means that it can live only by losing its soul. What we so easily call "Christendom" seems to respect Mars more than Christ.

It is not in a spirit of defeatism that we say that Christianity stands today at a critical point. There are worse things than crises. The president of a leading

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Chinese university last summer wrote, or drew, for me the Chinese expression for "crisis." It consists of two characters, one of which means "danger," the other "opportunity." The Christian church faces today one of the greatest opportunities in its history. Does not the very expression "crucial" point back to the cross? "In this sign conquer."

### *A NEW INTEREST IN RELIGION*

There is much to encourage Christians. The church does go on; millions of people prize their religion, and find in it the very heart of their living. Christians in Germany are standing their ground, thank God. Christian leaders are awakening. Leading scientists are professing their Christian faith. There is a new interest in real religion on the part of youth. A Preaching Mission has just been greeted by immense crowds and by deep interest everywhere throughout our land. The heroic enterprise of foreign missions goes on, in spite of the necessity for severe retrenchment; ministering to the poor, the sick, the lepers, the benighted, the women, the children, to all people everywhere, particularly the underprivileged, in the spirit and name of Christ, and as a mighty evidence of the undying compassion of the human heart. The record of what missions has done in foreign lands during the past century or more is one of the great stories of human history. There is something real and vital in the heart of a Christianity that can sustain such a work.

I know there is much criticism just now of missions and missionaries. Some of it is warranted by plain facts; much of it reveals sheer ignorance of facts. On the basis of firsthand contacts, I would say with emphasis that the foreign mission work of the church is on the whole one of the best things in the world; and that the faults in the missionary movement are due not, in the main, to the missionaries, but most of all to the churches here at home. When Woodrow Wilson was president of Princeton University some fathers of students asked, "Why aren't you making more of our boys?" His answer was, "Because they are *your* boys." The chief weakness of the missionaries is that they are our missionaries, and we sometimes demand that they represent our weaknesses and pettinesses.

### *THE CHURCH IS WAKING*

Happily signs are not wanting that the church is waking up to the needs of the situation. A document that every Christian should read is a report on "The State of the Church" presented to, and published by, the Federal Council of Churches, last December. Get it and study it. I know of no other institution, educational, commercial or political, which has dared publish so searching an analysis of its own faults, hopes, prospects and needs.

Christianity is unique among the religions of the earth for its innate power of self-criticism and renewal. Again and again, it seems to come to a dead-end; and then arises some prophetic figure, some new movement, some awakening, that leads on to fresh demonstrations of the undying power of the spirit of Christ to adapt itself to any changes in the order of things. That spirit is evidencing itself wonderfully today. Through danger and difficulty Christians are standing for their faith. Next summer Christians from all lands, representing every phase of Protestant and Eastern Christianity, will gather in two conferences, to plan freely for the right working of Christianity in the days ahead. Let anyone who thinks that Christianity is dead or dying look at the facts again.

Changes must come, radical changes, that will hurt and confound many good people. The church must come to see itself, not as a sacrosanct institution of God, to be preserved at all hazards in its traditional form; but as an instrument, to be used, sharpened, bent into new shape, or wholly replaced, as the need of the world may demand, and as God may will. The law of Jesus that only he who loses his life shall save it must be cheerfully taken by the church as its law. Let what may happen to the church, if only the kingdom of God may come!

The most fervent wish of some of us, as we look forward to the conferences to be held next summer, is that the deepest concern of the Christian leaders there shall be not how to save the church in the present situation, but how the church may best spend itself for the life of the world.

### *THE CHURCH NOT MANY, BUT ONE*

We must come to see the Christian mission as one, the world around; not one thing in Asia and another in America; a single enterprise, to realize in human life everywhere Jesus' ideal of the kingdom of God. That includes an individual gospel and a social gospel; the local church and the world church; missions to the heathen and missions to self-satisfied and supercilious Christians. It means lessened insistence on particular doctrines and creeds and forms, and a new interest in "the simplicity which is in Christ." It means, for one thing, that the sacrament of Communion shall nowhere be regarded as a private possession; but that every Christian everywhere shall have the right to commune as a brother in any church anywhere.

To put it in a single phrase, what Christianity needs today, what it must have if it is not to die for lack of faith, what its truest prophetic souls are seeing more and more clearly as the prime necessity of the time, is a recovery of the sense of Christianity as a world movement, and of the church as a world community. We Protestants especially must catch that vision and commit ourselves to it. Protestantism has too long been a divided force, a collection of competing sects.

We must learn to "covet earnestly the best gifts" of all varieties of real Christians and to combine them in a united church. Someone recently put this in picturesque form thus: "If we could get religion like a Baptist, experience it like a Methodist, be positive about it like a Disciple, be proud of it like an Episcopalian, pay for it like a Presbyterian, propagate it like an Adventist, and enjoy it like a Negro—that would be some religion."

Outward union of all Protestant bodies in one ecclesiastical organization may not be possible or desirable. But what can be done, and should be done, and must be done if Christianity is not to fade away into impotence, is to leave differences of creed and divergences of practice and diversities of order to the free choice of groups, all of

which will find their highest life in loyalty to the great realities of the spirit of Christ, which are the same for all Christians; so that all may cooperate in a single united effort to realize the gospel in all the life of the world. What is the test of a true Christianity? Paul answers, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Jesus answers: "Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." We must all be content with these simple and spiritual tests; we must count as a Christian in the fullest sense everyone who lives in that spirit; and outward forms, formulas and formularies must be kept in their

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proper place, as valuable for those who prize them, and to be respected by all; but to be regarded as essential by none.

We must really see Christianity as a world movement, and the Christian church as a world community. An American Christian must feel and be more at home with a Chinese Christian, or a Japanese Christian, or any other Christian, than he is or can be with an American unbeliever. Christianity must be a stronger tie, a more commanding loyalty, even than patriotism. One must be a Christian first, and anything else second. It has been well said: "It does not take much of a man to be a Christian; but it takes all there is of him."

### *A SEVERE TEST, BUT IT IS CHRIST'S*

Do you object that that is setting up too severe a test? Well; what did Jesus say? "He that loveth father or mother, or son or daughter, more than me, is not worthy of me." It is just an extension of that demand, a necessary corollary to it, when we say: "He that loveth his own denomination, or his own nation more than me, is not worthy of me." One who is not altogether a Christian is not a Christian at all.

Thus to see Christianity as a world movement, and the church as a world community, is not to change Christianity into something new. It is to find once more the original ideal of Christianity which Jesus revealed, and which Paul and the other apostles held, which later ages have too much disregarded. Christianity is a universal brotherhood, or it is a failure.

In a recent study of Paul one finds this striking statement: "Much of what Paul stood for has faded with the passing of the years but still men dream of a universal brotherhood transcending all bounds of race, class and nation—a dream which would long ago have perished from the earth had not a Jew of Tarsus seen a vision on the road to Damascus."

Once let the whole Christian church recover the sense of world mission and world fellowship, and new life will come to it everywhere. The smallest local parish will gain a new dignity through a fuller realization of its vital unity in a great world movement. Thomas H. Huxley, who was far from being religious in any formal way, pleaded for the study of the Bible in the schools of England, because, as he said, it forbade the veriest hind in the smallest village to forget that he was a link in a chain of humanity as wide as the world and as long as history.

### *RETHINKING MISSIONS*

To catch this vision of Christianity as essentially a world movement would put new life into foreign missions, making it, not as some supporters and some critics think it, a patronizing effort of superior races to give to lesser breeds the advantages of modern culture, but as all true missionaries have made it, a loving and humble approach of brother to brother for the fuller sharing of all that is good in life. It would make local parishes shine with a new glory, as parts of the greatest enterprise on earth. It would give a new dignity and sense of worth to every individual who bears the name of Christian, a sense of membership in the oldest, strongest, most honorable, most vital fellowship on the face of the earth. It would fulfill the ideal so beautifully expressed in the words of an unknown Christian in the second century of our era: "What the soul is in the body, Christians are in the world; for the soul holds the body together and Christians hold the world together. This illustrious position hath been assigned them of Almighty God, which it were unlawful for them ever to forsake."

To bring this about demands the full and heartfelt devotion of every individual Christian. It is one of the most fatal of common fallacies to think of the church as a sort of big, vague generality, existing somewhere, which is somehow to meet the situation, while we sit on the sidelines and watch the game, ready to voice approval or disapproval, but feeling no personal responsibility, and doing nothing about it. The church means you, and me, and everyone who calls himself a Christian.

I recall an occasion when I had the privilege of speaking on the ever urgent problem of doing away with war and establishing peace as the natural condition in the world. I quoted the statement made by General Tasker

H. Bliss near the end of the World War: "If ever there is another war, the churches will be to blame." At the close a well known man came forward and said with emphasis: "Dr. Merrill, that is absolutely true; if there is another war, the church will be to blame." I asked him: "What church do you belong to?" With very obvious embarrassment he replied: "Well, I used to attend such and such a church, but for some years I haven't attended church very much." It did me good, and I hope it did him good, when a lady standing near said: "I call that passing the buck."

I wonder how many of those present at this service have been nodding their heads, or silently approving, as I have tried to voice the great need of a new spirit in Christianity, a new line-up in foreign missions, a new reality and definiteness in the whole Christian movement, while all the time they hardly count in the ongoing of the church, by attendance, gifts or personal service. It is so easy to clothe one's soul in a garb of imaginary goodness, through criticizing others; and nothing is more deadly than such a course.

### THE SECRET OF POWER

We must have Christians on fire with faith in Christ, love for Christ, that will not let them sit still, or keep silent. We need, every one of us, to hear again that call of the Master: "If any man would serve me, let him follow me." We wonder at the power of those early disciples, so well described as "twelve men who once held the whole world up to God." How did they do it? It was a time very like the present: Christianity had to make its way in an alien society, against determined opposition, and amid vast indifference. Somehow they succeeded. And the secret of that success is revealed in some of the things those men said, when they stood in peril of their lives, and gave witness to their convictions: "We must obey God rather than men. We cannot but speak the things that we have seen and heard. There is no other name under heaven, whereby we must be saved." They felt that Christ made all the difference. They believed that; they said that; they meant that; and so they won out against heavy odds. That is the spirit we need today.

Some two years ago I heard a story that has been constantly in my mind ever since. It was about a Negro preacher, who had died not long before—having lived over ninety years, having been a minister over seventy years, and having preached more than ten thousand sermons from a single text. I said "That couldn't be," until I heard what text it was: "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Then I said to myself, "What else is there to preach about?" That is what counts, now and always. If we Christians, each of us, all of us, have the mind of Christ, we shall transform the church from a staid, respectable social movement into a real Body of Christ, through which his spirit can do its perfect work. We shall push the cause of world missions, which is just the carrying out of the program and will of Christ, with a devotion, and a backing of prayer, interest and sacrifice, that shall make the wonderful record of the past look like child's play. We shall find our chief joy in serving the kingdom of God in the spirit of Jesus Christ. That is all that is needed to bring the hope of the ages to fulfillment in the kingdom of God in the life of humanity.

### WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

I would leave with everyone who is listening to me, as with myself, this question, "What are you going to do about it?" Here is the greatest work in the world, the one real hope of a better world, an order in which justice, peace, brotherhood and joy shall be the natural atmosphere. We can have that kind of a world if every Christian in the world will begin to live in the spirit of Christ, and to seek first the kingdom of God.

What are you going to do about it? Do not answer that question to me. Answer it to God and to your own conscience. A few years ago, when the Church of Christ in China was planning a five year evangelistic campaign, they asked the moderator to suggest a little motto or prayer. He gave them this: "O Lord, revive Thy church, *beginning with me.*"

If that prayer could rise from the heart, really from the heart, of every individual Christian in this country, the world would bow its head in wonder at the revelation of the glory of God. It is the prayer for every one of us just now: "O Lord, revive Thy church, *beginning with me.*"

# Faith in the Magnificent

**By Richard Morrow Steiner**

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1.*

THERE has been much preaching, and I have contributed more than my fair share of it, directed toward the indifference of modern men and women toward religion. It has been preaching based on the assumption that that indifference is a willful product of the neglect of the religious function, of the shutting of the eyes to the possibilities of growth inherent in holding to a religious faith. We have assumed that more and more men and women think that they are finding completion through the satisfaction of their physical and mental needs, unmindful that they have spiritual needs. I am wondering if perhaps we have not overstressed this aspect of the present decline in religious fervor. I am wondering if there is not another and perhaps more cogent reason for this increasing neglect of religion.

These are indeed times that nourish doubt rather than faith. Faith, apparently, cannot find sufficient nourishment in the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." In a day when the nations of the world are apparently blind to the lessons of history; in a day when nations are rearming and preparing to unleash their armaments against one another in cruel and senseless bloodshed; in a day when nations are divided by civil war, real and potential; in a day shadowed and made gloomy by racial hatreds and persecutions; in a day when millions are living off the bounty of governments instead of the fruit of their toil, it is

hard to have faith, hard to have faith in anything—in God or in man. Perhaps that is one reason why many of our churches are two-thirds empty.

In the years 1928-29, it was easy to have faith. The world was on the upgrade after a disastrous war, and prosperity was here to stay. Poverty was to be eliminated. There were to be two cars in every garage, two chickens in every pot. How far from reality was that vision, a vision held not by one man alone, but by millions! It was easy then to have faith, too easy. Today it is hard. For today the doctrine runs that there will never be two cars in every garage and two chickens in every pot; but from him that hath two cars, one shall be taken away, from him that hath two chickens, one shall be confiscated. Not only will poverty not be eliminated, but we shall always have with us a permanent group of unemployed, not only unemployables but unemployed. Is it not possible that this is as false a view as was its opposite? Our faith in the one was shattered. Should that have destroyed our faith forever?

### *WHAT KIND OF FAITH?*

Perhaps the fault was not with faith, but with the kind of faith we had. Was not the faith that was destroyed a faith in man's ability, unaided by a higher power, unguided by a higher righteousness, to build out of greed, out of covetousness, out of cruelty, a kingdom not of heaven but of plenty, a kingdom whose benefits were to be higher wages, higher dividends, rather than a kingdom of truth and beauty and goodness? Was not our faith a faith in the material values of life rather than the spiritual values?

I recall that in 1919 I had a part-time job clerking in a men's clothing store in south Chicago within the shadow of the steel mills. There on Saturday afternoons I sold the workers eleven and twelve dollar silk shirts, and thought that the millennium was here, and they thought so too. I was mistaken, and so were they. Silk shirts are not the sign of social salvation, nor are relief rolls the ultimate seal of social damnation.

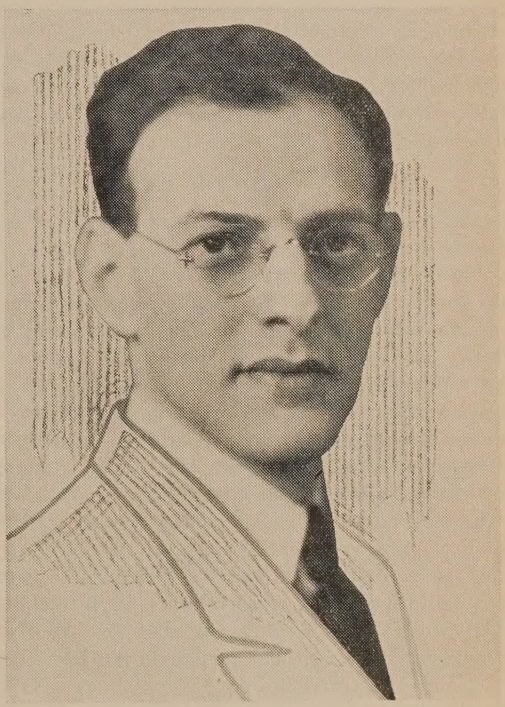
As our faith in 1928-29 was based upon a yardstick of material well-being, so our lack of faith today is based upon the same measurement. If we are to restore our faith, we must have a sounder basis for the measurement of our progress. The world, and all things worldly, are too much with us. Even religion seeks salvation in statistics, whereas salvation can come only from the soul of man. Too many of us find little or no meaning to life save the earning of our daily wage. Too few of us could answer the question: What meaning has life for you, what keeps you going? in the same manner as Charles A. Beard, the historian, who once wrote in reply to the same question:

"For myself, I may say that as I look over the grand drama of history, I find, or seem to find amid the apparent chaos and tragedy, evidence of law and plan, an immense achievement of the human spirit in spite of disasters. I am convinced that the world is not a mere bog in which men and women trample themselves in the mire and die. Something magnificent is taking place here amid the cruelties and tragedies, and the supreme challenge of intelligence is that of making the noblest and the best in our curious heritage prevail."

On the surface such a statement seems humanistic, but between the lines I read a faith in a lawgiver and in a designer of the progress of man, to whom man must turn if he is to bring his intelligence properly to bear upon the problems that man himself has created.

### *A FAITH BORN OF LIVING*

God is not blind that he does not see the tragedy of man. God is not heartless that he is not hurt by the stupidities of man. God is not dumb that he does not speak to man out of the mouth of history, out of the mouths of men and women of good will—God's will—who are ever present here upon earth. These men and women of good will—God's will—are men and women



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who have faith, not only in the cosmic creative spirit whom they call God; but they have faith that that spirit is at work in the world through the power of sacrificial love, that there is in the world moral law as God given as physical law. These men and women have a further faith that if humanity could but learn to obey that moral law, could but use that moral law as they have obeyed and used God's physical laws, humanity would progress in the moral and spiritual sphere as it has progressed in the material and physical sphere.

Such a faith is not based solely upon the intellect, or solely upon the emotions. It is neither a rational faith, nor an irrational faith. It is what has been properly called a superrational faith. It is the product of the reaching out of the mind and the heart into the infinite. It is the progressive discovery of Truth, Beauty and Goodness; all the material, spiritual and ethical factors that have made man what he is, attended by an increasing awareness of what man might be. Such a faith is

not easily attained. It is not the product of incense burning, creed reading, or the repetition of newly invented pious phrases. It is the product of creative, self-sacrificial living. It is the product of giving one's last ounce of energy toward pushing the human race one step farther in the path of spiritual progress.

Perhaps some may feel that they have neither the talent nor the eneregy to essay such an heroic task as "pushing the human race one step farther in the path of spiritual progress." After all, the human race is a large order. It is so large an order that I suppose no one seriously considers that I mean that any one of us is potentially capable of affecting every living human being inhabiting this earth. But it is precisely what I do mean. Was it Archimedes who said, "Give me a lever long enough, and a place to put it on, and I will move the world"? There is such a lever, and it is called "Faith"; there is a place to put it on, and it is called "God"; and there is a power that can swing that lever, and it is called "Man."

### *YOURSELF—AND THE WORLD*

If this seems fantastic, consider this: Who is it, of humanity that you know the best, most intimately, over whom you have the most influence? There can be no doubt that it is *yourself*. You would resent, and rightly resent, the implication that you have no control over yourself, that you have no self-control to guide and direct your own actions. Perhaps you would not resent it, perhaps there may be someone who would deny the existence of free will, and say that you are now, and will become, only the product of your environment. What makes your environment? Other people. Other people, then, affect you. But *you* are a part of "other people" to those who make your environment for you, so you make the environment for others. You cannot escape the fact that you affect others who in turn affect you, so you do have some part in the creation of your environment. It is a circle, but it need not be a vicious circle. It may be a circle for good.

But let us return to those who will admit the existence of free will. You can affect yourself, you can push yourself along the path of spiritual progress. I use the word "can" advisedly. It was for me the hardest lesson of English grammar to distinguish between "can I" and "may I," and I still sometimes use the one where I should use the other. I "may not sell all that I have and give to the poor," though I could. I may not, because of the social pressure that would condemn me for leaving my wife and children without beds in which to sleep, chairs on which to sit, dishes from which to eat their food. But I *can* and *may* so direct my life that the quantity and quality of the beds, chairs and dishes I possess shall not loom so large on my horizon that their possession becomes the summum bonum of existence. *You* can and *you* may increase the importance of your spiritual values while you diminish the importance of your material values.

### *MAGNIFICENCE OUT OF CHAOS*

A few years ago there was a play produced called "Craig's Wife" by George Kelly. It tells the story of a woman who married, not a man but a house. Her carpets and bric-a-brac were more precious to her than her husband's love. It is a play with a double moral, both of them applicable to the point I am making. The first is, that material well-being is not enough for happiness; and the second is, that "those who live to themselves are left to themselves." The first moral is obvious and needs no further elaboration; but the second moral, while it may be just as obvious, its application to the particular problem I am discussing needs some elucidation. The person who is centered in material well-being is self-centered. The person who is centered in spiritual well-being is socially-minded. The one is eventually left more or less to himself, according to the intensity of his materialism; while the other constantly affects in a positive way everyone with whom he comes in contact.

If we were all black, or all white—I am speaking now in terms of materialism and spirituality—there would be no social or spiritual problem; for the all black would be left to themselves and would affect nobody, and the all white would soon turn this world into a paradise. But alas, we are none of us all white. The evil that we do, because we do come into contact with others, lives after us quite as much as the good that we do. Furthermore the evil and the good that we do is not confined solely to those whom we meet, for it spreads to those whom we have never met; those whom we affect in turn affect others. As when a stone is dropped into a pond, every drop of water is affected by that stone from shore line to shore line, so our deeds affect the whole of life. It may be a miniscule effect in the farthest reaches, but the effect is there. So I contend that it is not fantastic to assume that you and I not only may, but can, push humanity one step farther in the path of spiritual progress. Not only may and can, but should; for if we do not, in spite of ourselves, we shall push humanity away from the path of spiritual progress.

### *THE MEASURE OF FAITH*

It is in the energy we display toward reaching the higher goal that we find the measure of our faith. It is in seeing clearly the inevitability and the implacability of man's progress toward a higher life that our faith is revived.

There are some moments in history when the trend seems to be in reverse. Such a moment is that in which we are living today, but a clear-minded reading of history will, I am confident, cause us to echo the words previously quoted from the writing of Mr. Beard: "As I look over the grand drama of history I find amid the apparent chaos and tragedy, evidence of law and plan and immense achievement of the human spirit in spite of disaster. I am convinced that the world is not a mere bog in which men and women trample themselves in the mire and die. Something magnificent is taking place here. . . ."

Do you believe, do you have faith, that something magnificent is taking place here? Or are you contributing to the chaos, the disaster and the tragedy? If you have that faith, and if you are living by that faith, then you are lifting mankind, all of mankind, out of the mire into magnificence.

# Greeting the Promises From Afar

By James A. Richards

*But the Lord said unto David my father, whereas it was in thy heart to build a house for my name, thou didst well that it was in thy heart: nevertheless thou shalt not build the house. II Chronicles 6:8, 9.*

THAT is a plain statement. Solomon stands at the greatest moment of achievement of all his life. For years he has been working to give a fitting home to the spirit of his nation. Now the task is done. All are gathered for the dedication of the temple. Posterity is to hear much of Solomon's wars, Solomon's wives, Solomon's wisdom, Solomon's wealth, but it is to hear much more about this building now being consecrated. Solomon's temple is to be his supreme achievement. Then, at the height of his success, he throws in a bit of family history. With admirable filial piety he remembers his father and that his father wanted to do what the son had done but could not. David's times were too full of wars for David to build. But all the time David desired what he could not have, wanted to do what he could not do. Now the son states that God himself was pleased because this was the case with David. "But the Lord said unto David my father, whereas it was in thy heart to build a house for my name, thou didst well that it was in thy heart: nevertheless thou shalt not build the house."

How could that be? Are children wise to cry for the moon? When they do that we laugh at their folly and make a proverb of it. Is it not a prime waste of time to desire what one cannot have? Surely it is better to learn contentment with what one can have. If we could harness all the energy that men pour out in a single day trying to do what they cannot do and hitch that energy to some attainable endeavor, would not the world get on much faster than it does? I sometimes think how interesting a book a competent scholar might write on the history of the English word "idealism." He would have to be a metaphysician to tell how this word has stood for a concept of the nature of reality. He would have to be a moralist to tell the place this word has had in the story of ethics. But he would also have to include a chapter telling how this has become a word of scorn. In that chapter he would quote many writers and many speakers who have sought to dismiss whole companies of men from any serious consideration by dubbing them "idealists." Here we are far indeed from seeing God as One who will praise a man for desiring what he cannot have and wanting to do what he cannot do.

### *DREAMING, FOOLISH AND WISE*

Surely one can understand this protest and even find something solid and wholesome in it. The daily papers recently published a list of questions put by a psychologist and suggested that if a man asked himself these questions and honestly wrote down his answers in yes or no, he could by counting the ballots tell how sane he is. One question was, whether much time is given to daydreaming. Who has not met the man whose chief imaginative stock in trade is the building of fantasies? He is forever picturing himself as other than he is. He is imagining himself the star athlete speeding down the field while the multitudes applaud, or the financial wizard who is outwitting all other traders, or the new Moses to lead a scattered people into the promised land, or the inventor of some revolutionary remedy or machine. He does all this while at the same time he goes right on living his soft and pampered life, neglecting the business that he has and shirking the fact that he might play a real part in building a better community and world. There is a desiring to have what we have not, a wanting to do what we cannot, that marks one as incompetent, that even lures one toward insanity.

Nevertheless, the ancient statement of Solomon stands, and a life that does not desire what it cannot have and try what it cannot accomplish is a life that misses the greater glory. It may be possible to see this quite concretely in the case of David. David wanted to win his people's wars, to establish his people's independence, to build their political capital on the heights of Judah and to crown that capital with the temple of Jehovah. The three first things he did; the last he could not. But may it not be that he did the three things that he could do far better because he wanted to do the thing that he could not? From the time that as a lad he was summoned to dispel Saul's evil spirit, through all his battles with the Philistines, through all his family disturbances, through the slow solidification of his people's public life, how much more vigor he must have had because of his ambition that outran all possibility! How often there must have been a dignity hovering around those other deeds because a part of their purpose was the hopeless hope of building at last a temple of God.

### *UNHERALDED BUILDERS*

Furthermore, there is the question whether Solomon would have built the temple if David had not wanted to. It was the great endeavor of Solomon's life that required laborious cooperation from a multitude of others. How seldom do our great ideals come to us unfathered! How often does the son tell you that the great purpose which he has accomplished was something that first overtook him in the home of his youth or that he first borrowed almost intact from others gone before! Langley had to try to fly and tumble a failure and a laughingstock into the Potomac before the Wright brothers could have their great day at Kitty Hawk. Moreover, the great social accomplishments require a long time of preparation, of hope deferred, of service from men who dream the thing that they shall never see and greet the promises only from afar before at last the advance is made into solid fact. Think of the men who assailed the iniquitous corn laws of England, desiring what they could not have and wanting to do what they could not do and dying defeated, before at last John Bright was able to build a new temple of freedom for the British poor. Think also of the men who had to do the same for the liberation of the American slaves before Lincoln could sign the proclamation.

It was more than filial piety for Solomon to pay tribute to David when all men were praising him for the temple finished. He was naming an indispensable

source of determination and of power that had moved him and his people to success when he said: "But the Lord said unto David my father, whereas it was in thy heart to build a house for my name, thou didst well that it was in thy heart: nevertheless thou shalt not build the house."

### *SUCCESSFUL FAILURES*

There is indeed an indulgence and a toying with idle fantasy that is nothing but an ignoble escape from reality and a treasonable waste and destruction of precious energy. But there is also a desiring what we cannot have and a wanting to do what we cannot do that mean attaining what we otherwise would not attain and supply an energy to future victors without which the battle would go very hard with them indeed. When at last Mount Everest is climbed, that victory will be planted squarely on all those who heretofore have failed.

Now move from Solomon and David down to our present day. The terms of our endeavor may differ, but the inner meanings remain the same. Go into any school or college. There you will find two groups of students. You will find those who aim for an A-plus in every course. You will find those who are content just to "get by." Rare indeed is the student who can get A-plus in every course. Where students are well selected, few are those who cannot "get by." But which group will do the better? Which will get the more from college? Which will start ahead of the other in the waiting race of life? To ask such questions is to answer them. Those who desire what they cannot have and want to do the impossible will be ahead. It turns out that they did well to have it in their hearts to build something that they could not build.

Indeed, I believe that we never do our best until we are attempting what we cannot do and that our best living must always be haunted by a sense of failure. When Queen Victoria celebrated her Jubilee every poet in the nation tried his hand at verse. Where are most of those verses now? Then, when the splendor of those days was passing, Kipling wrote thirty lines, but it is said that he threw those lines away. Why? Because he wanted what he could not have, he tried what he could not do, even to distill the soul of an empire on which the sun never sets into five brief stanzas. But someone rescued the lines, and just because it was in his heart to do what he could not do, he wrote the one poem of the occasion that still has vitality:

> God of our fathers, known of old,
> Lord of our far-flung battle line,
> Beneath whose awful hand we hold
> Dominion over palm and pine,
> Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
> Lest we forget, lest we forget.

### *CAN MORAL IDEALS BE TOO HIGH?*

I recall that Henry Sloane Coffin once said to a group of men studying for the ministry that when they got into the pastorate they would find very soon that they needed to be three men in order to do what they wanted to do, *but* that they would never do the work of one man well until they began to feel that way. I treasure a certain little painting. I treasure it because it was done by far-off hands that all life teaches me to love the more. I treasure it also as the best work she ever did. I am told that when she finished it, she threw it in the waste-basket only to be rescued by a sister. Why did she do that? Because she knew she had failed. She desired what she could not have. She wanted to do what she could not do, even to capture all the glory of a New England autumn on a little piece of cardboard. But just because of that she had done the best she ever did.

There it is again. I have heard it solemnly argued that it is best not to have one's moral ideals too high because that is so discouraging. Pass by the confession of

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cowardice involved in that statement. But tell me whether you want to intrust your affairs to a man who means to be honest but not too honest, or your health to a doctor who means to be skillful and devoted but not too much so, or your children to mates who mean to be clean but not too clean, or your heart to friends who mean to be loyal but not too loyal. If our lives are to point upward at all, it is well to want what we cannot have, to try to do what we cannot accomplish, even as it was well with David. It is well to take as the architect of our lives, not one who can tell us how to "get by" and attain a success that is no success at all, but rather him who said that though on Solomon's site there should be not one stone left upon another he would build another temple not made with hands.

As already implied, this also has a social bearing. We said it is probable that Solomon could not have done what he did do if David had not had it in his heart to do what he could not do. There is an epic being enacted in American life today of which very little is being said, partly because of a delicacy too rare among us, but of

which I am sure that posterity will take large account when it tries to evaluate one of our present very public men. I defy anyone to tell my politics from my pulpit speaking. A minister has as much right as the next man to his political opinions as long as they are thoughtful, honest and patriotic, yet usually does well to keep them from his pulpit. It is therefore with no partisan bias, one way or the other, that I now speak.

A young man in full career was smitten with infantile paralysis. It looked like the final ringing down of the curtain on his ambitious public life. But he desired what he could not have and wanted to do what he could not do. He desired complete health. He wanted to mold his withered limbs back into usefulness. With perfect courage and infinite industry, he attempted the impossible. He failed, but he became President of the United States! He failed, but because of him ten thousand sufferers all over our land and many times ten thousand who suffer with and for them breathe a new and more rational hope and often attain what they otherwise would not attain because of what he had it in his heart to do.

You can't tell, you just can't tell how often the courage in your heart will fan the waning embers of another's daring into flame! Because you try and fail another may go on to glorious success.

### *SOME DREAMS THAT WILL COME TRUE*

Sometime there is going to be genuine church unity in the world. Sometime the rivalry of denominations is going to be over and communities and causes will be no more divided by the institution that above all others ought to unite them. Sometime the prayer of Jesus that they may all be one will be answered. When? I do not know. I don't think anybody knows. But one thing I think I do know. It will come only after many men, perhaps successive generations of men, have wanted what they cannot have and tried to do what they cannot do and have not contented themselves with a specious glow of self-righteousness that comes from dreaming but by every method to which they can put their hands have worked toward the thing they shall never see.

Sometime the world is going to cease to be embarrassed by its riches. The workers of the world are going to cease to be cursed by their own productivity. Sometime it will seem incredible to historians that once millions of men wanted to serve but were not allowed to do so and more millions through no fault of their own appeared as orphans in the presence of God's bounty. When will that come? I do not know. But one of the bright spots in our present darkness is the multiplication of men and women who in their hearts want to build this world into a home for the name of the God who loves the least as much as the greatest, even though they have to die in the faith, having only greeted the promises from afar.

Sometime peace will come. Otherwise God is a failure and all our human story nothing but "sound and fury signifying nothing." When, I do not know, and hope deferred often makes the heart sick, but meanwhile I take off my hat to the men gone who wanted what they could not have and tried to do what they could not do and to the men living who now greet the promises only from afar and manfully struggle toward them.

Surely Rabbi Ben Ezra was right. We do not get the measure of a man by the things which he has done and for which the world can pay him in present coin. The unfinished and the unrewarded have to come in, too.

> Thoughts hardly to be packed
> Into a narrow act,
> Fancies that break through language and escape;
> All I could never be,
> All men ignored in me,
> This, I was worth to God.

We, too, must desire so much and want to do so much that we, too, shall have to die greeting the promises only from afar. Then only may God ever say to us: "Though you accomplished less than you wanted, whereas it was in your heart to build a house for my name, thou didst well that it was in thy heart."

# Old Human, New World

**By William P. Lemon**

*And God said unto Noah, Go forth from the ark, thou and thy wife and thy sons and thy sons' wives with thee. . . . I will smite no more every living thing . . . while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. . . . And Noah began to be a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: and he drank of the wine and was drunken. Genesis 8:15, 16, 21, 22; 9:20, 21.*

*But as the days of Noah were so shall be the coming of the Son of Man. Matthew 24:37.*

WE know that flood stories are common to the human race, and may be found all over the world. Scholars have collected some eighty or ninety of these traditions, and declare about forty-nine to be original and genuine. Perhaps the oldest is in the Babylonian epic, "Gilgamesh," recently translated by Prof. William Ellery Leonard of Wisconsin. Then there is the Indian version of a catastrophe referred to in the *Vedas*. Manu, the first man, for befriending a small fish is warned of an impending flood and actually is towed in his ship to a mountain in the north by the fish, as payment for a favor. The Greeks also have a legend of Deukalion who was warned by Prometheus, his father, that there would be a flood of rain because Zeus had determined to destroy the brazen race. The former built a chest and, after nine days and nights, landed on Mount Parnassus. A new race of men that came from stones thrown over the shoulder was the grand result, according to this tradition. We may well expect that the Hebrews, who embodied so many of their truths in story form, would include this widespread conviction of a period when there was a literal "cleaning up."

You recall how Socrates at the end of the "Gorgias"

gives a story of future judgment and calls it not a fable but a "true tale." The story of the prodigal son loses nothing because it is not factual history. Indeed, as a truth of timeless and spaceless significance, it is of more importance than a truth, local and temporal, of a particular fact. Have we not done much harm through all the years in trying to insist upon the literal historicity of some of these great folk-stories, such as the Garden of Eden, the Tower of Babel, and the Deluge narrative? When the story of Noah and the flood has been completely rationalized, we have not authenticated it for the race. It would seem that the story has always appealed to people. In the fifteenth century the miracle plays at Towneley, Chester and York contained an account of Noah and the Ark and, incidentally, there was always an amusing interlude in the dialogue between the patriarch and his wife. The lady refused to enter the Ark and was eventually forcibly saved from the deep dampening of her ardor, but not before she had boxed the ears of the patriarch. You recall also that "Green Pastures" included the Flood crisis with great vividness.

### *DISAPPOINTING NOAH!*

However, we have not exhausted this scripture when it is reduced to the ark of the toy-shop; to the dimensions of a bedtime story, or to the episodes of a play. The author of what seems to be an addendum to the original record has, we believe, a sense of the ironical in his portrayal. He is dramatically describing a new world, after a tragedy has been enacted. A *de novo* creation is about to replenish the earth. The ills that flesh is heir to have been blotted out in one fell swoop. It is as if the Lord of all cried, as we do at times: "Let's begin all over again. Let's start from the bottom up." Here we have the chosen and selected survivors of a world catastrophe. A spiritual and sensitive spirit, amidst a sensual and secular generation, has maintained an open ear to the voice of the Most High. Verily, Noah is pictured as an Athanasius *contra mundum,* standing foursquare to every wind that blows. Is he not called a "perfect" or "complete" man? Was he not able to transcend the immediate, and the sins that so easily beset us? Here was the original "purging" of the race, and after a period of discipline and preparation, we see the holy family stepping out again upon earth. Yet, not the earth of possible future floods, but one characterized by law and regularity. Henceforth probability can be the guide; and, with such stability, prediction, accumulated experience and premeditated ends are actually possible. The rainbow of promise is felt to be a sure sign that, henceforth, Heaven would guarantee stability and sequence to the physical world.

Yet what do we find? Surely there is realism here; for the erstwhile saint is scarcely over the threshold of the Ark and down again upon terra firma, before he is revealed as a common drunk. Verily, the treasure is in earthen vessels! The man who returns the stare of ridicule is an object of shame before his own family. Saved from the great flood, Noah is to be drowned in a winecup. "And God said, Go forth from the Ark . . . be fruitful and multiply in the earth . . . not again will I smite all things living. . . . And Noah . . . drank of the wine, and was drunken."

Surely this last "and" is not in the proper causal sequence! A new world, an old human. A stewardship of responsibility, a driveling drunkard. A stable world, a staggering saint without his wits. A cleaning up of the scoffing and scorning of one generation, a shamefaced and bewildered coming generation compelled to cover up the folly of the founder of a new day. Daring indeed is the conception of the God in this picturesque record. He is described as brooding over the great catastrophe and as saying to himself—the writer naively passes over the question as to how this soliloquy is made known to men—that henceforth he would not resort to such drastic methods. Force, annihilation, extinction, wholesale execution solve nothing, and because man's evil begins at youth, the Creator will cease any such interference. There shall be forevermore a guaranteed stability to earth, and the world shall be characterized by regularity and sequence. If there is no apparent cause for the love of God, there shall be a cause for the succession of seasons, for the alternation of heat and cold, the regularity of crops, and the sequence of day and night.

First, does not this after-image of early religious experience reveal what it true in every age, so that in New Testament language we might say "as the days of Noah . . . so the coming of the Son of Man," and agree that whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our benefit? Are we not witnessing a reaction after a great effort? No wonder Emerson can say, "A great licentiousness treads on the heels of a reformation," and he goes on to recall the words of the wife to Martin Luther: "Doctor, how is it that while subject to papacy we prayed so often and with such fervor, whilst now we pray with the utmost coldness and very seldom?" The obedient saint who braved "the whips and scorn of time" lies drunk in his own tent. What an anticlimax! How are the mighty fallen!

### *POST-REFORMATION REACTION*

Consider our national experience. We begin by a veritable world-shaking revolution—although we do not now like to be reminded of what the rights of revolution imply and, ironically enough, those who appropriate the name are sometimes the most conservative. Then we made an appeal to "the decent opinions of mankind." We sloughed off the accretions and the adventitious wrappings of our human nature and claimed truths felt to be "self-evident." Ours were to be rights based on "the laws of nature and of nature's God." We witnessed the coronation of the common man, and the fixity of classes was no more. Here indeed was an approximation to a classless society. No divine right of kings must be allowed. "Laymen only" need apply for posts as rulers. In like manner the claims of a hierarchy were disallowed by the supreme court of early American opinion. The church and the state must be rigidly set apart. Under the influence of Adam Smith, whose book was published the very year of our Revolution, we, in company with many other people, put almost abject faith in the belief that, left to individual initiative, the economic laws of supply and demand would work out automatically. Then we shared with the world the doctrine of evolution in 1859, and this but served to give us a facile

sense of automatic progress. To increase our confidence still more, came technological developments; and speed gave an illusion of progress, even as goods were confused with goodness. Indeed our whole principle of political democracy seemed to imply that all the differences between the devil and God, all the range from the demonic to the divine, could be accounted for by differences of nurture and degrees of education.

### *SOME SAD FACTS ABOUT AMERICA*

Like Noah, we inherited a new world, but how quickly went the fumes of fermentation to the head and soon many lay sprawling in their tents, objects of derision and reproach. Truslow Adams goes so far as to

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connect our lawlessness with the swaggering individualism which was brought to an end in 1890 by the passing of the frontier. True loyalty to our country should not blind us to the fact that the record of a century and a half is not wholly pleasant reading. The millennium did not come in with the Mayflower. All too frequently we have exchanged George III for Tammany Hall, for a Jimmy Walker, or a Bill Thompson, or for such conditions as have been witnessed in Louisiana. We may ridicule the pomp and circumstance of the Old World, but to find oneself in a political convention among the drunks, or even to listen in on the big show of a national convention, is not calculated to increase the respect of prostrate Noahs, even though they be in a new world.

Bitterly did our forebears resist the encroachments of church into politics, and we have the first amendment to our Constitution; but to exchange the authority of the papacy for the antics of an Amy McPherson, the orgies of a Father Divine in New York City, the anachronism of a Zion City where the theory of the flat earth is a part of religion, and for a state founded by those who claimed divine authority for plural marriages, is not exactly inspiring.

The even greater tragedy, however, is a world of order where a man can plant a vineyard and be sure of fruit, but is found later self-deprived of conscious reflection and paralyzed by his own industrial process. Yet is not this our actual plight? A world, scarcely recovered from the shellshock of a terrific war experience, avowedly believing that the next one would be even more catastrophic, assured that force in the last fray did not accomplish anything—for Germany so far from being conquered is the world's leading problem—and positive that we are all financially insolvent as nations, municipalities and as people, is massing armaments as fast as it is humanly possibly and seems powerless to prevent it! And the United States is in the vanguard of such a world.

### *THE COLLAPSE OF CONSTITUTIONALISM*

A world that has learned, through centuries of strife and through human sacrifice untold, to acquire government by the consent of the governed, and to build up orderly processes of constructive statesmanship, has virtually been forced to abandon all its liberties, either by involuntary means in fascism or by voluntary means in those nations which have allowed "crisis governments," and the end is not yet. We ourselves frankly conceded that we must either radically change our political structure or sanction a temporary suspension of constitutionalism.

What of the new world of education? Here, in the New World, we have more youth in institutions of higher learning than in any country in the world—and we lead the world in delinquency! Is there any correlation between culture and character? Can we be assured that honesty is more an expectancy of the graduate? That property is safer in the hands of students? That a higher standard for relations between men and women prevails among candidates for degrees? We have made vast technological improvements but with little correlation to human welfare. Authorities declare that could we, by magic, go back tomorrow to 1929 production, only 80 per cent of our workers could be employed.

In one of his later plays, Eugene O'Neill has given us a dramatic portrayal of this old human and new world. His "Dynamo," published significantly in 1929, shows Reuben Light, son of a preacher, whose basic instinct leads him to love Ada Fife, daughter of an atheist. The crude translation from fundamentalism to materialism is shown in the young man's experience. With an almost Promethean challenge to civilization, the man made to worship the Infinite falls down before the machine and eventually is sacrificed to its remorseless clutches as a victim to a new god.

Certainly in the embalmed Lenin, whose picture is the substitute for ikons; in *Das Kapital* as the new Bible; in missionary propaganda and messianic hopes there is wrought, before our very eyes, on one-sixth of the earth's surface and among 135 million people, the full cycle of a revolution which reveals the needs of our

common human nature. What shall we think of this picture of ourselves? Oedipus, solving the riddle of the Sphinx, became helpless in the face of his own personal problems. Hogarth, in one of his drawings, gives us a satire in the form of a man in prison for private debt who spends most of his time in working out schemes to pay the national debt. Are we likewise to be founders only to flounder? Is the old human to prove too much for the new world?

### *THE FAULT IS IN OURSELVES*

Is not the chief difficulty in the fact that we have been deluded by outer changes, deceived by the multitude of schemes, and confused by the mere change of scenery without reference to the actors? The fault is not in our setting but in ourselves if we be underlings. The precise issue is in the process of life itself, typified by the action of fermentation. One moment from the hand of God it is the "pure juice of the grape" but, exposed to the atmosphere and allowed to have the action of enzymes, it can convert a saint into a fool, and a leader into a helpless and prostrate piece of unconsciousness.

Is not this a parable for us? What is good now may be evil in another day. "Our little systems have their day; they have their day and cease to be." Time makes ancient good uncouth. Our basic instincts, wholesome and legitimate, can easily be prostituted so that gregariousness means excessive urbanization, pugnacity becomes allied to organized suicide clubs; group loyalty and "likemindedness" to a spurious nationalism; acquisition to schemes of monopoly, and craftsmanship to mechanization. Our virtues can be turned into vices, for "Love dwells hard by Jealousy; Justice isolated can be Despotism; Ambition so readily overleaps itself and Self-respect may be turned into Pride." "The corruption of that which is best is always the worst." Proportion and Equilibrium, Timeliness, Stewardship are the requisites of life.

We observe these old stories, and witness the stages of a staggering and scattered humanity that is called upon to go through a Babel of confusion ere the coming of an Abraham who believed God and was counted potentially righteous; who against hope believed in hope and who became the heir of a kingdom which included all the nations of the earth.

Must we go through a lost generation ere salvation comes? Is it not the very essence of the gospel that we may avoid the circuitous route of trial and error? The Spirit of Christ is with us, and by participation we may do "greater things than these" because of cumulative experience, larger perspective, more modern facilities, and, above all, because of a Pentecost which cancels a Babel. Then every man in his own tongue shall speak the wonderful works of God, and shall not be drunken with wine, but be filled with the Spirit.

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EXPERIENCE has taught us that the way to avert war is to seek the pacific solution when the cloud of controversy no bigger than the palm of a man's hand first appears upon the horizon.

*Assistant Secretary of State Welles.*

# The Eye of the Soul

**BY OSCAR F. BLACKWELDER**

THE SOUL has sight, or how could Helen Keller see? Fading physical sight and increasing inner light wrote, "O Love that wilt not let me go." A blind Milton saw a "Paradise Regained." A sightless Fanny Crosby desired the passing "Gentle Savior."

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the whole world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

When love is done, life goes blind. Love can be analyzed into the true, the beautiful, the good. When these three are discovered in love, life has found its final philosophy and the soul will not go blind. When they are separated, love degenerates into sentiment and then arises the greatest moral problem of our generation: enjoyment without obligation. The true, the beautiful, the good are united classically in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, the love lyric of the New Testament.

### *SUFFERING A HANDICAP OR HELP*

Suffering may send the soul blind, but "love suffers long." Suffering and music are universal languages. To study the meaning of suffering is to listen to the deeper chords of life. Who best can suffer, best can do. Robert Louis Stevenson is reported to have confessed: "For fourteen years I have not known a well day in my life. I have written when my head swam with weakness, when torn by coughing, suffering with fainting fits and nervous headaches." Great poetry is often the story of broken dreams. Elizabeth Browning is not alone in turning a bed of affliction into a mount of transfiguration. The perfect picture of Jesus is as the Suffering Servant.

Yet, for many, suffering is the sweat of the soul and salty water burns the eyes and blinds. Love can keep the soul from going blind through suffering for "love beareth all things." Hate is like a brittle reed; love is like an oak tree. Love is the toughest thing in the world. Love keeps the heart fires burning.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with thee
The silence of eternity,
Interpreted by love.

Life's only enduring interpretation is love. All things work together for good to those that love. The question asked Charles Kingsley, "What is the secret of your life?" and his answer, "I had a friend," can be translated anywhere. He lived because he loved. It is life's perfect tense, for love suffers long.

Envy may blind the soul, but "love envies not." Envy paralyzes pure motives and shuts out the fresh air. It

turns the bright cloud dark side out. It reduces enthusiasm to criticism. It writes no songs, builds no cathedrals. It makes the user do his worst in the presence of the best. It speaks behind hand-covered mouths. It makes cowards. It is the password to the fraternity of the defeated. It makes others besides Judas use a handshake as the symbol of friendship and a kiss as the symbol of love to betray true friends. What alum is to the blood, envy is to friendship and healthy sympathy—it stops the flow. Envy blunts the point and dulls the edge of life. It makes judgments inaccurate. If life be a footrace, envy is stiff-arming the one who runs next to you; both are slowed up, the goal is no nearer, either

Oscar F. Blackwelder

may lose his balance. "To return evil for good is devil-like; to return evil for evil is beast-like; to return good for good is man-like; to return good for evil is God-like."

Love alone can keep the soul from going blind through envy, for "love believeth all things." Love believes in the right of every man to run his race. Love believes in the birthright of every life to come to its own highest development. Love believes in every man's chance to prophesy according to his own proportion of faith. The Great Scorer will not ask "Did you win or lose?" but "How did you play the game?" "To live above low hatreds and revenges, cultivate the habit of looking behind men to God." Love envies not.

### *WHAT DO WE WORSHIP?*

Pride may send the soul blind, but "love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own." Life is largely a matter of angles, the way we look at situations and people. These angles are now called attitudes. How different the view from a high mountain or tall building, and how foolish to climb these high places with a weak heart. Pride is like that.

One of America's greatest teachers of English literature recently died and at the close of the funeral service, by his request, a colored quartet sang, "Swing low, sweet chariot, coming for to carry me home." America thought him at the top of the ladder. His own estimate was that the chariot of the Lord would have to come down low to find him. A Scotch preacher lay ill in his home. A neighbor called and whispered in his ear, "Safe in the arms of Jesus." Rallying his fading strength, the Scotchman answered, "No, at his feet." Love is like that.

Pride is revealed in whether, and what, we worship. The problem of America, unlike that of the Orient, is not that we shall have too many gods but that we shall have no God. Will Rogers was right in judging a man, not by his face, but by getting behind him and seeing what he is looking at. A man lives in his reverences and his reverences measure his pride.

There is no more misunderstood word in our language than sacrifice. It is not something we do when our backs are against the wall. It is rather that which must be done in order really to live. The path of love leads to the place of sacrifice and at that place the flowers of humility grow. No one can be humble who has not sacrificed. The heart of humility is to sacrifice your will to God's.

Love will keep the soul from going blind through pride because "love hopeth all things." Love hopes the most and not the least for all men. Love hopes that the best man will win. Love hopes and hungers for the triumph of truth. Far more than the pride of a man's own opinion is his right to the truth, which alone sets men free. Truth is the language of love. Love is not puffed up and seeketh not her own.

### *THE CURSE OF WORRY*

Worry may cause the soul to go blind, but "love is not easily provoked." There is the worry that comes from great responsibility. There is the worry of broken confidences. There is the worry of fading strength and growing cares. But why make worry an added responsibility and care? It is the worm inside the apple. Worry reduces vitality, weakens the power of the mind to judge correctly, impairs the courage of the will. Worry and not work causes nervous breakdowns. Work may wear out, but worry burns out. It destroys. Many problems can be prayed out that cannot be thought out any other way, but no problem was ever worried out. That is not thinking. It is the destruction of the thinking processes. It is killing the hen that lays the golden egg. The foreground of worry is nervousness and the background is fear. In our impatient, modern nervousness, there must be constantly something to stimulate our feelings. The type of music many people enjoy expresses nothing but unrest and indicates their taste. Then they wonder why trouble, disappointment, backset, find them helpless and make them lose their balance. They have learned to be restless. They have not learned to be lonely—and brave.

Adequate religion must deal with this increasing disease of nervousness and fear. It cannot be the task of

the psychiatrist alone. It requires more than a process of "re-education." Because a man makes a failure of his business does not mean he must make a failure of his life. Religion must show how to "hold your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you," and must prove that "the world and everything that's in it" can be yours.

Love alone can keep the soul from going blind through worry, for "love endureth all things." Perfect love casteth out fear. Love throws light on the darkness of worry. Love brings patience to the weariness of worry. Love undergirds the discouragements of worry with the courage of faith. Love casts out the sin of worry with its own white purity. Love quiets nerves. Love reunites family firesides. Love is the silver cord that finally brings the wanderer home. Love pours peace on troubled waters. Love endures.

#### *LOVE CANNOT THINK EVIL*

Evil may send the soul blind, but "love thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." Queen Matilda of Denmark used to pray: "O God keep me innocent; make others great." But innocence is not possible where there is not strength, and greatness includes purity. The finest disposition, if unsupported by steady habits and fixed principles, is no safeguard against degeneracy.

The modern eleventh commandment has been called, "Thou shalt not be found out." It is comparatively easy to hear older as well as younger folk say: It is my business what I do with my life. What matters it if I do not live your way? Evil is wrong to those who think it wrong. As long as I do not violate publicly social laws, the concern is my own alone. There are hungers as pure as for food and water. As for religion, it is essentially honesty and frankness—that is more than the church can say. You Christians differ so greatly among yourselves that I reserve the right to differ from all of you. Set your own house in order and then make your claims public for the rest of us. I can find God in music, nature, my own library or my work much easier than from a poor choir and a rasping preacher, with antiquated philosophy. I do not wish to be classified; I ask no group to assume responsibility for my actions. If God be honest, he will respect my honesty. One world at a time is enough for me. I love Jesus Christ but my personal relation with him is all I want.

Recitation of doctrinal platitudes will not answer that kind of conversation. Not a declaration of our faith, but a careful analysis of the contents of faith will reply. Modern life is like a medley. The former sharp divisions between right and wrong, light and darkness, truth and propaganda, have been shaded. So much of life is in the twilight zone. Religion must not only carry a telescope by which to see the eternal hills, but must use a microscope to study in laboratory fashion the secret chambers of the subconscious mind and conscious contacts with life. The next step in religion is very personal. It is the way of Jesus. It must be ours. The new day which is dawning is so great and so hopeful that it demands at the center of its life an adequate religion. Freedom is not the right to do what we please, but the power to do what we ought. Purity is truth in body, mind and heart. The personal laboratory method is the way of love.

#### *LOVE THE WAY TO PERFECTION*

Love alone can keep the soul from going blind through evil, for "love never fails." Love makes evil fail. Love works her way into the nooks and crannies of life and becomes the mortar to build the temple of God's Spirit. It holds life together. It completes the circle. Love is fellowship with the truth. He that loves will be made perfect. Love cannot fail.

"The ideal life is in our blood and never will be still. We feel the thing we ought to be beating beneath the thing we are. Every time we see a man who has attained our ideal more fully than we have, it awakens our languid blood and fills us with new longings." This is the appeal of Jesus. He is what we would like to be and has what we would like to have. In a competitive, calculating, critical world, love is often respected as a dream, but distrusted as a method. It will not work. But here is one life that has lived it, and the centuries honor him.

When the tree falls in the forest and no one is present to hear, there is no sound. Sound and love cannot be impersonal. Love does not exist as the natural power of gravitation. It is not a principle. Love reveals itself not in books or axioms, but only in people. The only eternal facts are personal. Jesus is love made real. Jesus is love spelled out in human life. We can be the extension of his personality.

Love is the way to interpret Calvary, where the broken heart of the Savior is within hand-reach of mankind. The Cross is love's necessity. Love is the infinite longing to bestow one's self. He whom the heavens cannot contain dwells in the heart that loves. To know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge means to be filled with the fulness of God and to make personal and modern the love lyric of the New Testament. Faith will be changed to sight, hope will end in vision, but love is changeless and eternal.

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## Great Living

When one hears a great symphony by Tschaikowsky, let us say, or Beethoven, there are convictions so profoundly believed that the music goes through with them to the very end. One says to himself, Surely that theme has been said as beautifully as ever it can be said. Yet that theme returns again and again, elevated and resplendent beyond our dream. A man says to himself, Now, surely, all the possibilities have been exhausted and, lo, at last the theme marches back once more into the music glorious like an army with banners. Whatever may be your judgment about music, great living is like that.

Is there anything a man could wish for his friends better than a life like that—great convictions which life develops, expands, elevates and glorifies, fine at the beginning, loveliest of all at the last? And is there anything that a man could better pray against for himself or his friends than the opposite?

Our Father, who hast given us but one chance to live a life upon this earth, help us not to make a failure of it at the end. Harry Emerson Fosdick.

# I Believe in Jesus Christ

By Milton M. McGorrill

*I am the way, the truth and the life. John 14:6.*

THE person who says "I believe in Jesus Christ" must go on to state in what sense he believes in him. There is little common content to that sentence. One man may have a wholly theological meaning to his use of the language. Another may mean a faith in what the Master stood for rather than a confidence in any creed about Jesus. It is obligatory, then, that one define the content of his faith when he makes such a positive declaration. I choose to define by way of opposites first, and then by constructive positive statement.

We see in the first place that Jesus has been interpreted by the term "Messiah" for many centuries. This is a Jewish mode of thinking. It suggests a definite idea to those who have the Jewish background. The idea of Messiah has varied in Jewish history but certainly its basic content is that some day someone would come—either from heaven or from a Jewish home, who would be God's messenger to subdue the enemies of the Jews and elevate the Jews as masters. Then all nations would accept leadership from that essentially Jewish theocracy. There was a Jewish group which had a more spiritual view of messiahship but it was not the idea of the ascendency.

### *A PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPT*

You and I turn away from this method of interpreting Jesus, because Jesus does not fit expectations of a glorified Mussolini, and secondly because the whole idea means nothing to us anyway. We do not think in messianic terms at all.

When Christianity as a movement went out into the Mediterranean world, it was equipped only with its Jewish vocabulary and manner of thinking. Both of these were foreign to that Greek-thinking world. Thus was Christianity faced with the problem of finding a new vehicle to carry the message or not have the message understood. It, therefore, found a philosophical concept familiar among the Greeks and seized on it as the vehicle of understanding. That successful attempt is found in the Gospel of John. In that method the Greek idea of the logos was used. The logos was the Divine Principle, the pre-existent wisdom that represented reality. When the interpreters of Jesus wanted to have their message understood, they said that Jesus was the Divine Principle come into the flesh. By that method they connected with the Greeks who, like all of us, must understand the unknown by reference to the known.

We do not any longer think of Jesus as the Divine Logos become flesh because by that the logos has to be explained more than Jesus does. Our prevailing philosophy is not the logos philosophy. Our attempt to explain Jesus on that basis falls to the ground with thoughtful people, because that very background which in the first century was an aid, becomes to us a hindrance.

There have been many other attempts to explain Jesus very much in terms of the prevailing pattern ideas of a given age. They have come down to us as pieces in the museum of theology. Their value ceases when their use in common experience passes away. Though there have been many ways of explanation, which have become outmoded, the figure of the Master, himself, becomes more inspiring and morally commanding than any way of interpreting him.

Perhaps the one which causes more trouble to thinking persons today than any other is the method of proving a spiritual value by a materialistic evidence. There

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are thoroughgoing materialists in religion as well as in history or economics. The person who is trying to think his way through the problem of Jesus will be more often tripped by the theological materialists than by any other group. It is the point of view that insists that the Bible cannot be known as inspired unless every word was dictated. Every date and number is held to be accurate. Every scientific idea must be unquestionably a reliable report of objective fact. Jesus cannot be the son of God unless that is attested by a biological miracle. He cannot be the living Christ unless he rose in physical body from the dead. He cannot return among his people unless he comes by bodily presence, riding on the clouds of heaven. This is materialistic theology that attempts to prove Jesus' spiritual value by resort to a physical evidence. The ancient problem has been turned around. Centuries ago Jesus' acts were to some the proof of what he was. With many today, what he was is proof enough to establish the most weird stories of what he did.

Let us be fair with ourselves and admit that such a method of proof of Jesus' spiritual value we do not use.

We repudiate the whole system of belief in Jesus Christ which calls in a materialistic philosophy to support itself. We want nothing to do with a system of proof that is so dependent upon the particular changing thought patterns of a generation! If some unquestioned proof were given that Jesus was not born of a virgin, the whole religious faith of some persons would come tumbling down. Or if some proof of inaccuracies in the Bible were given, some persons would throw away their religion. My own faith is not built upon anything so shaky as that. A religion that is built upon such a basis that further investigation may destroy is on a dangerous sand foundation. I refuse to be caught by any such uncertainty and regard it as immoral to put religious faith on such insecure, crumbling pillars.

I believe in Jesus Christ, not as an insult to human intelligence, but as a fulfillment of human character and a revelation of the force at work in the universe which we call God or Father. If there is something in his nature utterly unapproachable by us, he loses for us the power to strive for achievement. We admit we are whipped at the start and must look for another who is not separated from us by a great gulf.

### *JESUS LEADS ON A CLEAR WAY*

May I use a homely illustration to show what I mean? Two men want to travel; one has five thousand dollars, the other has one thousand dollars. If the man with one thousand dollars has no chance to have any more money for travel, then the five-thousand-dollar man has an unquestioned advantage. Here is a difference which can never be made up.

If Jesus Christ is separated from me by a gate through which I can never pass, I cannot be very much concerned about what he says to me. But if he went up a road in which the way is clear and he beckons me to follow, I can give my utmost energy to follow him, knowing that if I fail, it will be not because the way is barred, but because my own will and strength are weak. It is that kind of view from which I would have you see him. Does that mean that I am as good as he is? Not at all. He is so far beyond in quality that I am not worthy even to touch him. But the road he traveled and the virtues he made may be mine if I so will it.

We have been using the word "forces" to describe what we mean by God and character. Let us use that word as our own again. Let us use the biological pattern which is familiar to our modern minds. We have seen "Man, the organism," using more and more of the forces of his environment until he finally appropriates the personal forces. From that analogy, Jesus Christ becomes the perfect specimen of adjustment between a personality and the forces that give it life. The use of the personal forces is perfect from our standpoint. He is tempted in all points as we are, but without sin.

### *JESUS AS REVEALER*

Now, if he is the perfect illustration of God's life in man, he does two things for us. He becomes the revealer of the forces at work in our universe. He is the revealer of God. Use the words "Son of God" if you wish in that connection. By what he is, we know, at least up to the revelation of Jesus, what the forces at work in our universe are. Otherwise he would never have appeared. He is not the only one who makes such revelation. But to me he has made the perfect revelation.

Water in the inlet of a bay is the same as the water out beyond in the ocean. It is but the revelation of the vast surging waters that cover the earth and respond to the swing of planets. When Jesus said "I and my father are one," he meant that the quality in God was in him rather than that he and God were one person. When we see forgiveness in him, Truth in him, Love in him, we are taken back to the source, confident that these forces are part and parcel of life itself. What we term "the character of Jesus," we see as the prism revealing the nature of the forces that have brought him into being.

These same forces are available to persons who will make the same kind of dedication he did. Jesus, himself, seems more real to us by the very fact that other persons accepting that revelation in him are led to the kind of life shown in him. As the scripture itself says, "They took account that these men had been with Jesus."

Lyman Abbott had an old uncle in New England whose Godlike character was known to the countryside. When someone asked the young man, Who is God? he answered, "Someone like Uncle Jerry."

We may go farther and say "Someone like Jesus Christ." We need no biological miracles to deal with that answer.

When I ask, "What is the nature of the spiritual force back of the universe?" I shall answer, "Someone like my Mother, like Russell Conwell, but supremely like Jesus Christ." Some power must have produced him and having produced him, used him as a revealer of itself.

### *THE ONLY WAY OF LIFE*

But in addition to being a revealer of God, he becomes for us "a way of life." We are not concerned here with what he wore, or even with what exact words he used. We are concerned with the spirit that drove him on. That becomes our way. His insights into life we accept as our own. His revelation of personality has gradually become the organizing principle of many a human society. Slavery was not even challenged in New Testament times, but was gradually undermined by a constant teaching of brotherhood. War has been waged as part of Christian history, but the time is now arriving when we are seeing the truth of what he said about it, "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." We are now seeing that nobody wins in war. We all lose.

His way of cooperative good will is slowly being recognized as the way of life. I am not so naive as to believe we may do away with force overnight. Our failure to control the lunatic fringe of citizens in traffic regulation is proof that we have to use strong-arm methods once in awhile. But the only organizing, creative principle for life is cooperative good will. That gets us on toward a better civilization; force only stops the tiger from tearing us to pieces. It gains us no satisfactory life. Put your family under control by a club and see how far you go in having a satisfactory home life. Put

t on a foundation of cooperative good will and see what ou may build by reason of that. Yes, he is a way to ive as well as revealer of what is at the heart of the niverse. As he himself said: "I am the way, the truth nd the life."

How useless is all this debate about creeds and niracles!

When one has caught a vision of the compelling reality in Jesus Christ, he never quite gets away from it. It is not subject to the changes of doctrine nor the fluctuating statements of creeds. There is a moral grandeur hat rises above life as Mount Blanc rises above the peaks round about. There in its splendor, in its loveliness, yet in its lure, it dares men on to scale its heights. It is that haunting figure of Jesus Christ that man never quite loses, though theologies come and go. One who has seen the power of that life can never be the same.

A Catholic priest said: "Again and again I have been tempted to quit, but the figure of that strange man hanging on a cross drove me back to my work again."

Paul said, before King Agrippa: "Wherefore, O, King Agrippa, I have not been disobedient unto the heavenly vision."

We know now what he meant. He had had the experience with something from which he could not be extricated until he had given his very life. So it is in a hundred realms. Men and women who have seen that figure go to business and make it clean, to slums to redeem them, to foreign lands to serve. That vision is the "Hound of Heaven" which pursues us to the end. "The way, the truth," and supremely, "the life."

# If He Hunger

By Walter H. Upton

*. . . if thine enemy hunger, feed him. . . . Romans 12:20.*

*. . . hunger and thirst after righteousness. . . . Matthew 5:6.*

A HUNGRY man ought to be fed. He needs food more than he needs advice or counsel. Few men, when hungry, are in any condition to do anything other than appease their appetite. Both Paul and Jesus lived close enough to poverty so they knew hunger when they saw it. They spoke not only metaphorically, but realistically. Jesus was a realist. So much so that he could not witness suffering, want and hunger without taking steps to change conditions as he saw them.

The utterances of Jesus were characterized by their simplicity of form and depth of meaning. When he spoke of hunger, he used familiar language. Paul, in the concluding verses of the twelfth chapter of Romans was not voicing an ancient Jewish platitude, but was reflecting Jesus' own attitude toward hungry people. He was actually quoting; from whom he does not say. "For it is written," said Paul, "if thine enemy hunger, feed him." This was one extreme of a most unpopular philosophy of life, namely: treating with decency and even kindliness one's enemies. It was a foregone conclusion with Paul that Christian people would treat kindly and with consideration their friends; but enemies—ah, that was different! And it remains so to this day.

The author of Romans was reflecting much of the sentiment contained in the Sermon on the Mount. He treated at some length the attitudes which the brethren should hold toward those who were not among "the brethren." He was, in fact, an echo of Jesus' own voice.

I should like to project this thought of hunger beyond the realm of the physical. I know how very important it is that people have food to eat, and the proper kind. I know how difficult it is for a hungry man to perform the normal functions of life. But there are other kinds of hunger. Let us look at them, briefly.

### *OURS IS A HUNGRY WORLD*

Phillips Brooks once said: "Sad will be the day for any man when he becomes content with the thoughts he is thinking and the deeds he is doing—when there is not forever beating at the door of his soul some great desire to do something larger, which he knows he was meant and made to do." You may call that day-dreaming if you wish. Call it ambition if you like. Some have spoken of it as "rugged individualism." And at that it takes on an entirely different connotation.

The evidences of our hungry world are to be seen on all sides. The stimulated man is not necessarily the satisfied man. He may be stimulated only to become more and more aware that he will soon be hungry again, or that he is still lacking something he ought to have and feels sure he can acquire.

We see in the bustle and activity of the commercial world what might be termed the external proof of our statement that the world is hungry. The depression, out of which we hope we are now emerging, came into existence because so many people allowed this hunger to consume everything else; and, finally, in a vain attempt to "just exist," they lost much of that hunger which was legitimate. The causes were many. We will never believe the depression is on its way out, nor will we believe we are experiencing a normality of national life until we are rushing again at breakneck speed—pursuing something, we scarcely know what, and being pursued by something or other. Men call it the "desire to get ahead." In proper proportions, that desire is a most laudable one.

What amounts to, and often is, cutthroat competition has made many a man a slave. He is not free to choose, always, the manner in which he goes out after business. The hunger of men about him shows itself in the mad rush from early morning to late at night. Business ethics are forgotten for the moment, or lost sight of entirely. If he would shun the stigma of being dubbed a "has been," a "down-and-outer," or an "also-ran," the man out in the hungry world must employ some of the technique which he sees being used with such ruthless effectiveness by his fellows on all sides. Go into almost any city of size in America. Listen to the table talk of business men at their noonday luncheons. See them hurriedly gulp down their food and in twenty minutes time or less they are back on the streets or at their desks, driving, driving, driving like mad. Hunger for commercial advantage does that.

The tragedy of all this lies partially in the fact that we little suspect how hungry our world really is. Two or three weeks ago, as the hour drew near midnight, I sat at a drugstore lunch counter eating a sandwich. I overheard the waitress confess to her escort, who was waiting for the closing hour, that she must be "at the grind here at seven tomorrow morning." Fear of insecurity—fear of hunger should she lose her job; fear that twenty girls stood in line to take her job away from her if she was late to work, drove her to "take it with a smile." Hunger drives men and women to do things they would not do under normal conditions at all. The hunger-driven world is all about us. It is quite easy to mistake that hunger for something else.

A class of boys at the church school were told by their teacher that God was and is everywhere. One of the boys, far better at asking questions than in the art of answering, piped up, "Is God in the jails?" For a moment the teacher was stumped, but retained enough of her poise to turn the question back to the class. Only one of them had an answer. He said: "God's in the jails all right, but those birds inside don't know it!" God is in this hunger-mad world of ours, but seldom do we know it.

### *HUNGER AND SELF-RESPECT*

Hunger for social advantage or political advantage, or pure and simple hunger to earn a decent living for one's family, all soon fall into what we call the category of self-respect. It soon becomes personal.

Many years ago, before John Tyler became President of the United States, he was instructed by those whom he represented in Congress how he was to vote regarding the Federal Bank measure, then pending. He could not vote against his conscience. He would not act against the instructions of his constituency. Claude G. Bowers describes Mr. Tyler thus: "So he tendered his resignation and walked out of the Senate chamber in the proud company of his self-respect." Even the hunger to be well thought of by those who had placed him in office could not rob him of his self-respect. His self-respect was not for barter. The proud company of his self-respect! How many of us wish we might constantly walk with that!

How easy it is to allow hunger to destroy self-respect! Physical hunger will do it. Mental hunger will do it. Uncontrolled hunger for position and social advantage will quickly destroy every vestige of it. How well we know that! Paul said: "If thine enemy hunger, feed him." What did he mean? Could he possibly have meant that every man has an enemy, and that enemy may be his baser self? And even a man's baser self will respond to the right kind of treatment and the proper diet. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst give him drink." Well, here was a new way of treating one's self—and a way seldom tried.

There is an unauthenticated Australian legend which tells of a young Indian prince who was taken into the royal presence following the subjugation of his tribe. A very valuable gem, known as the "Koh-i-noor diamond," had once been the possession of his ancestors. In the strife which ensued, this diamond had been stolen by the royal guard. It was later cut, polished and set. On this occasion, the diamond was placed in the ope palm of the young prince. Every eye in the room wa cast upon the expressionless countenance of the youn Indian. Would he fling the gem out of the window It had once been his. His own people had discovere it. It had been taken from them by force. Now it wa the most wonderful diamond the world knew. But i belonged to someone else. He turned it slowly in hi palm. There was hunger in his eyes. The enemy withi bade him fling it out of the window into the near-b stream. If he could not have what was rightfully hi own, at least his conquerors should not tantalize him b

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such tactless procedure. After several tense moments there came to him not only the instincts of courtesy, bu the recollection that it did belong to another, his sov ereign queen by conquest. So at last, with a winnin smile and a steady hand, bowing low, he said: "Madam it gives me pleasure to place in the hands of my sov ereign, this treasure of my ancestors."

I have met the enemy! He was hungry and I fe him—not what he craved for, but what he needed t have to make him my friend! Are you holding som secret "Koh-i-noor," an enemy hungry to be fed, whic if satisfied carelessly will destroy you? There is hunger, which if properly fed, will save both ourselve and our self-respect.

Jesus opened the Sermon on the Mount with thi familiar metaphor as his fourth statement: "Blessed ar they which do *hunger* and thirst after righteousness . . ." The nearest English equivalent we have for th Greek word *limos* is the word "desire." Jesus im plied in that statement that those who "desire," thos who "seek," those who feel the "craving for" the goo life, will, if they pursue diligently, receive that whic

they seek. The first eighteen verses of the fifth chapter of Matthew contain the so-called "rewards" which accrue to a man as a result of his spiritual hungering. If Job could have had the assurance of Jesus, he might never have given vent to his inner longing of soul as he does in the third verse of the twenty-third chapter of the book which bears his name: "O that I knew where I might find him!" Apparently Job and Paul were miles apart in religious experience as they were centuries apart in time. Hear the latter declare his search: "He is not far from any one of us; for in him we live and move and have our being."

Men have not always been as sure of the results of their hungering after "righteousness" as that. It is an all too common feeling that we experience. In some of his most sublime moments St. Augustine suddenly missed what he hungered for—God. Martin Luther, it is said, awoke one morning and through the greater part of the day was in profound despondency because he had dreamed that God was dead and that Jesus' beatitude about "hungering and thirsting after righteousness" was all a myth.

### *FOR WHAT PURPOSE?*

For what purpose are our physical hungers? Our intellectual hungers? Our spiritual hungers? If in them we are destined only to disappointment, of what benefit are they to us? Charles E. Jefferson, honorary minister of the Broadway Tabernacle, New York City, reveals in a graphic manner how helpless some men are when their hungers are dammed up at the very source where they might be satisfied. The scene is the interior of a Florida sawmill. It is fully equipped with the very latest in machinery. Colored men operate the machines. Both men and machines work with terrific fury. He watches them thus for several minutes. Turning to the millowner by his side, Dr. Jefferson asks: "How many hours a day do these men have to work like this?" To his utter dismay the man answers: "Twelve hours a day." He had expected to hear him say, "six," or perhaps "seven." But not "twelve." And then the owner added, significantly: "We've got to keep 'em busy, or else they will go out and get drunk in between shifts." No wonder men who are driven like that seek to drown the roar of machinery in their ears, by stretches of inebriation between hours of unrelenting toil!

"Hunger and thirst after righteousness!" What ironical preachment is this? How can men seek truth and see beauty, when superimposed over every other consideration of their lives is hunger?

If you are driving your physical body beyond its endurance, then slow down. If your mental and spiritual being is so harassed by the insistent demands of your environment that neither can take nor assimilate the nourishment needed for the abundant life, there can be but one answer; and that is starvation. The effectiveness of this symbolism of Jesus hinges upon the fact that bread, the staff of life, is such an undeniable daily necessity. Equally so, or even more surely necessary, becomes the sustenance which enables men to do their work and face the world as they find it. It is what Benjamin W. Robinson speaks of as the matter-of-fact statement that "Jesus is the breakfast or supper of the soul." Just as he was first to realize the hungry condition of the multitude, on occasion, he it is, if we could put in practice his teaching, who would "satisfy" the spiritual hunger of men today.

Raymond Kresensky puts it well:

> And then remember to open your heart,
> For that alone is the greatest part
> Of serving . . . hungry men.
> Open the door and your heart again,
> For God's out there with His only Son
> And He is, perhaps, the Hungriest One.

# A Pastoral Prayer

By Ware W. Wimberly

OUR Father: Thou knowest our needs, for there is no searching of Thy understanding and Thou art wise beyond the strongest mind among us to conceive. And because Thou dost know us so intimately, we come to Thee asking for guidance and help. As we naturally go to those who understand us best to give to them our confidences, so we come to Thee, knowing how far abler and readier Thou art to help us than those who love us most here on earth. Thou wilt not give Thy son a serpent when he asks for a fish nor a stone when he asks for bread.

We bring to Thee the secret things of our hearts which no one knoweth but Thee, the temptations which plague our thoughts, the sins which burden our hearts, all the weaknesses we vainly strive to overcome. In that hidden but most real battlefield of the soul, come as the Mighty One to warfare on the side of righteousness. For unless we can conquer on that battlefield, we can conquer nowhere else. And so we pray for victories within us and over our worst selves, victories we have never before known, victories that shall be as a sure sign unto us of Thy Presence in power. Lust, pride, enslavement to habits, unworthy ambitions—all the sins which so easily beset us and seek our souls to destroy them, from these, save us, O God of Might.

We would not ask this for ourselves. We have seen Jesus, "dying, risen, pleading." Our desire, our deepest and holiest desire, pushing up to express itself amidst our crowded lives, is to become equipped to serve him, worthy to be called his friend, and through him a friend to all the world. For because of him, our eyes have seen the world's need and our ears have been opened to hear the world's cry. And he has commanded us to minister unto Thy children, in their physical ills, their mental distress, their spiritual darkness. For his sake, who died to manifest Thy love toward us, give us victories over ourselves that we may know victories for him. We ask all this in his name. Amen.

# The Festival of Fellowship

By Victor M. Rhein

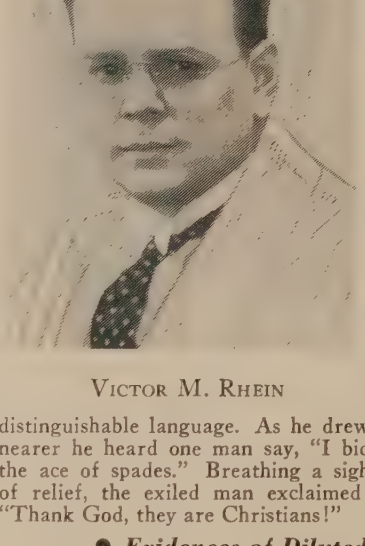
ONE of the most acute heartaches of a minister during the past few years has been the problem of helping to keep the budget of the local church balanced without hampering the work which the church is designed to do. There is the paid choir which must be maintained if people are to continue their half-hearted attendance. The minister's salary, even though several months overdue, must eventually be paid. Something must be paid toward the coal bill before any local merchant will deliver another ton of coal. Suddenly the roof springs a leak which if left indefinitely will play havoc with the plaster and paint. And thus one might go on almost indefinitely to multiply the hazards which beset the local church.

### ● *Raising Money by Sales and Luncheons*

Just as innumerable as the hazards with which the church is beset are the schemes to which it is willing to resort in the endeavor to replenish its depleted treasury. A bake sale, rummage sale, sample sale, Bingo party, a raffle, a clam-bake,, a luncheon, or a desert-bridge grace the church calendar almost every week.

With what consecration the ladies of the Busy Bee Circle toil and slave in preparation for a Business Men's Luncheon! They work for a whole day before the luncheon setting up tables, shopping, gathering together linens, silverware, roast-pans, etc. The whole town has been previously accosted by ticket saleswomen and coerced into buying a ticket. After two days of hard labor they have cleared the sum of twenty-five or thirty dollars. How did they do it? Mrs. Grundy bought a chicken and contributed it. She bought her own lunch after working all morning. Mrs. Jones brought a pie which was not used. Mrs. Grundy bought the pie for more than it was worth, but it was all for the cause! It was a fine luncheon—who wouldn't gladly pay forty cents for such a feed?—but the Busy Bees spent one dollar and twenty-five cents to make one dollar. Besides all this, they were in open, "pure and undefiled," competition with the local restaurants.

Bridge parties have been so overdone that Christianity might almost adopt the Ace of Spades as its newly earned symbol—much harder to bear, no doubt, than the Cross! Some weeks ago a magazine of humor published a cartoon in which a man from "civilization" was marooned on a secluded island. After idly wandering about for several hours he came upon human footprints upon the sand. Suspecting that they were the footprints of an individual from a cannibal tribe, he proceeded slowly and cautiously. After he had proceeded for some time he came within hearing distance of voices which were as yet mingled in an in-



Victor M. Rhein

distinguishable language. As he drew nearer he heard one man say, "I bid the ace of spades." Breathing a sigh of relief, the exiled man exclaimed: "Thank God, they are Christians!"

### ● *Evidences of Diluted Religion*

The religion of the church has been watered down and diluted so badly that one would hardly recognize it were he to be suddenly introduced to it after the absence of a decade. The economic world is not the only realm in which stocks have been watered.

This diluted religion may be a result of our defunct liberalism. Liberalism has been, for one thing, an exercise of extreme tolerance. It has tended to become so tolerant that it has had no intolerance. The result has been that these accretions have grown up about the church like mushrooms until the purpose of the church has been greatly obscured. The dynamic of the Christian message is lost in the maintenance of the organization which in the beginning was designed to propagate it.

The day is past overdue for us to call a sudden halt to this religious suicide. Some new techniques are needed in the maintenance of the church. May I outline a new venture in Christian stewardship which we have found very helpful in the work of our church?

### ● *The Unlamented Passing of The Church Fair*

Our autumn program has previously been cumbered with a traditional Church Fair. It was the introduction of the confusion of the market place into the church. Like most church fairs or bazaars of this sort the women of the parish worked for weeks to make handkerchiefs, linen pieces of all sorts and descriptions, and a multitude of items too numerous to mention. A supper was served in the evening, and after supper the whole family wandered from booth to booth buying things they did not want, but exercising liberality because it was the church. Often they were buying back what they had previously contributed. They went "a-fishing" in the Church School's Fish Pond, and bought ice cream cones and eskimo pies from the clowns. It was, in general, one more miserable example of the methods to which a Christian church had resorted to replenish a depleted treasury. The sum total of all the work and buying netted the treasury the magnificent sum of two hundred dollars!

After careful consideration and many hours of deliberation it was decided to abandon the Church Fair and to adopt a scheme of direct giving which would yet retain the values of fellowship and cooperation which were inherent in the old fair. This new venture we called "The Festival of Fellowship."

A committee of one hundred under the able leadership of a hard working deacon was formed. The committee was designed to include the most representative people of every organization of the church. A process of creative discussion led from the rough scheme of the Festival of Fellowship to the development of its philosophy and technique. In the process a philosophy was developed and became a part of the thought pattern of a hundred key people of the church. Each one impregnated with the enthusiasm of it went back to his own respective group and started an educational process.

### ● *Major Purposes of the Festival*

The Festival of Fellowship was designed for two major purposes. First, there was the necessity or raising funds for the church over and above that pledged by the constituency in the Every Member Canvass. But, second, any scheme designed to raise funds had to comply with several prerequisites—it had to be dignified, it had to increase the fellowship of the members of the

church, it had to be a cooperative endeavor, it had to be educational, it had to be enjoyable, and it had to appeal to all ages of the church family. These were all met in the scheme which follows.

Each family of the church was canvassed and urged to buy a "Fellowship." The Fellowship was a book of ten units which sold for five dollars. Each unit could be used later by any member of the family as a pass to one of six activities. Some families who could afford to do so purchased three or four Fellowships. Others purchased only a half, or whatever they felt able to purchase. But no one was excluded. In cases where families were unable to purchase any units they were quietly taken care of by a committee who spent an entire evening going over the whole parish list to isolate any such cases.

### ● *Other Churches Not Canvassed*

No one outside of the membership of the parish was permitted to purchase a Fellowship. We were asking no one from another church to help us support our church. Our neighbors have enough to do to help maintain the church to which they belong. But their inability to purchase a Fellowship did not exclude them from enjoying our programs, for they were invited to attend as the guests of the parishoners of the church. The holder of a Fellowship did not dare to sell it or any part thereof.

Early in the spring envelopes were distributed by mail as an aid to saving the five dollars required to purchase a Fellowship. Families were urged to save a quarter a week until they had accumulated enough to buy theirs.

The church constituency having been canvassed, we were now ready for the Festival. The money was relegated to a secondary place and the Festival promoted to the primary role.

### ● *Programs for All Groups*

There were six programs. The first was on Thursday evening and designed for the men of the church. It was called "A Country Party." The program was designed around the old country store with its old stove and cracker barrel. Games and eats kept the men until after midnight.

The second program was a "Children's Romping Hour" held on Friday afternoon for the children up to the fourth grade. There were stories, games and refreshments.

The third program was "The Harvest Tea," for the women, and held at the same time as the Children's Hour. Their program was constituted of music, entertainment, fellowship and tea.

The fourth program was the "Friday Night Barn Party" for the young people of high school and college age. The entertainment was constituted of country games, music, folk dancing, modern dancing and songs.

The fifth program, "The Show Boat," for junior high school children, was held on Saturday afternoon. The Parish House was decorated as a boat. The music and songs were those inspired by the sea. An old sailor told sea stories to the great delight of all present.

The sixth and final program of the Festival was the grand climax for the whole family on Saturday evening. It was a grand musicale for which the auditorium which seats nearly five hundred was literally packed.

One interesting item which might easily be extended was an incident on Saturday morning. A group of girls in the Intermediate Choir had practiced on the songs of the sea for several weeks. They held a dress rehearsal on Saturday morning. After rehearsal they went to the home of one of the little girls who lay upon her bed with a cast upon her leg. Her mother had brought her downstairs so that she could see the girls as they gathered about the piano to sing for her. The Festival of Fellowship was thus extended beyond the confines of the church building.

### ● *An Educational Project In Giving*

This scheme would not be particularly worthy of praise were we to stop just where we are. It has earned three times more than the Church Fair with but very little expense. It has been vastly more successful in its second year than in the first. Yet the Festival of Fellowship is not an end in itself. It is merely a step toward the ultimate in Christian stewardship. It has been an enjoyable educational project in Christian giving.

Plans are now being made for the third year of the Festival for the Fall of 1937. But this time it will be the celebration which marks the culmination of the Every Member Canvass. Next year the Festival and the Every Member Canvass will be one and the same thing. A family will be approached at an early canvass with the request that instead of two canvasses and two givings they cooperate by adding together what they have previously given and make one blanket pledge. The Business Committee will then know where the finances of the church stand. Besides, the charge of supporting the church is placed upon the basis of direct giving and part of the ancient dignity of the church is restored. The support of the church will not be a matter of swindling men and women into "stewardship" by a highly inefficient system, but all they give will go directly into the church treasury and their joy in stewardship will be infinitely multiplied.

# Quotable Verse

## Mourn Not the Dead

MOURN not the dead that in the cool earth lie—
Dust unto dust—
The calm sweet earth that mothers all who must die
As all men must;

Mourn not your captured comrades who must dwell—
Too strong to strive—
Each in his steel-bound coffin of a cell,
Buried alive;

But rather the apathetic throng—
The cowed and the meek—
Who see the world's great anguish and its wrong
And dare not speak!

RALPH CHAPLIN.

## Memories

SOMETIMES, when the grind of the city beats on my heart
Like a brazen hammer with terrible blows,
I think of a lost garden I knew in my boyhood,
Filled with the scent of the rose.

And sometimes, when the clamor of life seems endless,
And my soul is bowed with its weight of pain,
I think of an old, still apple tree in blossom
At the end of a hawthorn lane.

Oh, do not smile at such simple memories!
They keep us young, they keep the man-heart right.
And sometime we will all go back contented,
To a Garden and a Tree in a place of light.

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE.

# • WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

*Rev.* WILLIAM PIERSON MERRILL *has* been minister at the Brick Presbyterian Church, New York City, since 1911. Earlier pastorates were in Philadelphia and Chicago. For many years Dr. Merrill has been an outstanding leader in the cause of international peace and good will. He has written a number of hymns which are widely used. Dr. Merrill delivered his sermon "Christianity Today" before the Chicago Sunday Evening Club.

*Having received academic degrees at* Grinnell College and the University of Michigan, Rev. RICHARD MORROW STEINER attended the Chicago Theological Seminary and was awarded his B.D. degree there. He spent several years as a teacher. He was ordained in the Congregational Church in 1934, and since then has ministered at the Church of Our Father (Unitarian), Portland, Ore. Mr. Steiner is a member, in good standing, of the following denominations: Society of Friends (Hicksite branch), Congregational and Unitarian. He is a son of Dr. Edward A. Steiner, who for a generation has been professor of applied Christianity at Grinnell College.

*Rev.* JAMES A. RICHARDS *was pastor of* the United Church, Newport, R. I., for four years and then served as minister of the Mt. Vernon Church in Boston from 1909 to 1918. His next pastorate was at the Congregational Church in Winnetka, Ill., a suburb of Chicago. Since 1928 he has led the activities of First Church, Oberlin, O. Mr. Richards received his education at Phillips Andover Academy, Harvard University and Union Seminary.

*For more than a decade Rev.* WILLIAM P. LEMON was pastor of the Presbyterian Church on the campus of the University of Minnesota; then for several years he ministered at First Presbyterian Church in Iowa City, another university town. He now ministers at the First Presbyterian Church in Ann Arbor, Mich., and is also director of student work for the University of Michigan Presbyterian Corporation.

*Graduating at Roanoke College, in Virginia,* and at Southern Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbia, S. C., Rev. OSCAR F. BLACKWELDER pursued graduate work at Union Seminary and Columbia University. He was pastor of a Lutheran church in Roanoke for five years, and from 1925 to 1933 ministered to Christ Lutheran Church, the largest Protestant church in Baltimore. He is now pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Reformation, Washington, D. C. Last year Mr. Blackwelder toured the country as a member of the National Preaching Mission.

*Since the autumn of 1933, Rev.* MILTON M. MCGORRILL has ministered at Fountain Street Baptist Church, Grand Rapids, Mich. He received his education at Bowdoin College, Columbia University, Union Seminary and the divinity school of the University of Chicago. For two years he was director of young people's work for the American Baptist Publication Society, and for a year was minister of education at the Baptist Temple, Brooklyn. Then followed pastorates in Chicago and Boulder, Colo.

*A graduate of Chicago Theological* Seminary, Rev. WALTER H. UPTON was ordained in the Congregational ministry, and before coming to his present pastorate at the Edwards Congregational Church, Davenport, Ia., he ministered to churches in South Dakota and Wisconsin. For a brief period Mr. Upton taught public speaking in the University College, University of Chicago.

*Rev.* WARE W. WIMBERLY *is minister of* the First Presbyterian Church, Greenfield, Ia.

*Rev.* VICTOR M. RHEIN *ministers at the* First Congregational Church, South Norwalk, Conn.

# TITLES AND TEXTS

## What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

HOWARD CHANDLER ROBBINS, General Theological Seminary. "The Patriotism of Jesus." Luke 29:41—"And when he came near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

GERALD WATKINS, Trinity Baptist, Minneapolis, Minn. "When Language Fails." John 10:24, 25—"If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus said unto them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me."

OSCAR T. MOLINE, Church of Christ, Ft. Scott, Kan. "The Present Famine." Amos 8:11—"I will send a famine . . . of the hearing of the words of the Lord."

ALBERT W. SHECKELLS, JR., First Baptist, Middletown, N. Y. "The Moratorium on Morals." Judges 17:6—"In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

JOHN M. VERSTEEG, Walnut Hills-Avondale Methodist, Cincinnati. "Abusing the Prestige of Jesus." Luke 6:46—"Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

JOHN B. HUBBS, St. Paul's Episcopal, Delroy Beach, Fla. "Lot: the Man Who Went in the Wrong Direction." Gen. 13:12—"And pitched his tent toward Sodom."

WARREN E. HALL, First Presbyterian, Wyandotte, Mich. "The Family of God." Mal. 2:10—"Have we not all one father?"

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

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*Title of Sermon*

. . . . . .
*Text used (write out the text)*

. . . . . .
*Name of minister*

. . . . . .
*Name of church*

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*Address*

# The Editor's Page

## The Event of the Month

THE country is in a pretty bad state of jitters over the strike epidemic. The seriousness of the situation can hardly be exaggerated. The sit-down strike represents not only a new technique of industrial coercion by labor but also a new ethical principle. This principle defined itself in response to the charge that the strikers were seizing property which did not belong to them, a charge based upon undeniable fact. The reply is that the workers have a property interest in their jobs. With this goes the implication of a fair wage and the right of collective bargaining. Logically and ethically the workers are right. The difficulty lies in the fact that their claim has no standing in law. There is no law which says that a job is property. How then can the issue be settled? Plainly, it cannot be settled in the courts except by acceding to the demand for the forcible eviction of the sit-down strikers. The law is all on the side of the owners. The owners represent power—the power of organized government. But the strikers also represent power. It is the power of a great mass of citizens—workers—organized to secure what they believe to be their human rights. This power constitutes a tremendous threat. If governors and mayors act under their oaths to enforce the law and evict the strikers by force, the strikers may not merely hold their fort at the cost of their lives, but future sit-downs will not be undertaken barehanded. They will be armed sit-downs, prepared to hold the fort by matching violence with violence. Thus the threat takes the form of civil war. All attempts to read this situation in terms either of reason or law are vain. It is a contest of power. One side or the other must give way if the threat is to be averted. The workers must abandon their mass demands, or there must be some fundamental and structural reconstruction of the legal system to take a reasonable account of the principle of the worker's property right to his job.

**The Sit-Down Strike**

## The Book of the Month

A THEOLOGY FOR CHRISTIAN MISSIONS. *By Hugh Vernon White. Willett, Clark & Company, $2.00.*

THE modern missionary enterprise is falling between two impossible conceptions. One is the conception that requires it to carry a body of doctrine which is uncongenial to contemporary enlightenment. The other is the conception which demands that it shall carry no doctrine at all, but express in practical service and cultural contributions the spirit of Christianity, leaving the non-Christian peoples to draw their own conclusions. These alternative theories leave many Christian people without any effective motivation, with the result that the missionary project has dropped into a place of disregard, if not discredit. Dr. White declares that missions must have a theology, and proceeds to offer his own contribution to its formulation. He calls himself, frankly, a liberal. But you do not need to read more than a dozen pages to be assured that he is a Christian. He believes that Christian missions has something to say, as well as something to do, in non-Christian lands. He rejects the sentimentalism which says that one religion is as good as another, or that the religion a people already has is, necessarily, the best religion for that people. He holds that there is a *best* religion, and that it is Christianity. The problem which he faces exists within the framework of modern liberalism. The undisturbed conservative may not need this book, though it will do him good. But anyone who contemplates dropping the missionary enterprise from his body of Christian obligations should read what Dr. White has to say before letting it go.

## A Thought for the Month

ARE we guilty of half-heartedness toward the church? Do we apologize for it? Do we shrink from making it a central theme of our preaching? Do we hesitate to put the gospel invitation in terms of uniting with the church? I fear that the church has fallen into a secondary place in modern Christianity. Most ministers define their function as expounding the Bible, or preaching Christ, or interpreting the ways of God with men. Their message is bibliocentric or Christocentric, or theocentric. If I were a pastor again, I think I should make my ministry ecclesiocentric. I believe that the birth of the Christian church is the most important event in the history of the world. The birth of the church includes the birth of Christ, his life, death and resurrection, and those embryonic years in which the church was taking form under apostolic direction, producing the New Testament, and writing the great creeds. You cannot speak of the church too highly. The church *is* Christ—it is his body. Everything that is said of Christ may be said of his church. It is his living presence. It is the continuation of his incarnation. He is no longer here in the flesh, nor does he hover about us as a discarnate ghost. He is here in a body, and his body is the church. This is not a mere mystical figure of speech, but an objective reality. All that Christ did in life he now does in the living church. The salvation which he brought to his first disciples he now brings by his presence in the church. The sacraments derive their meaning from the church which is itself a sacramental institution. Men find God in the church. They are saved by coming into it. They grow in grace by being members of it. Its lore is the most precious body of culture in the world—its sacred books, its hymns, its liturgy, its doctrines, its history. Yet we apologize for it. We have the strange notion that men can be saved apart from it. And we imagine that civilization can be saved by secular and scientific schemes when all the time the church alone has the power of life and death for men and nations.

**The Living Church**

Charles Clayton Morrison

# An Open Letter *from* STANLEY I. STUBER

To the Readers of The Christian Century Pulpit:

As already announced in the Pulpit, I am compiling an ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PULPIT ILLUSTRATIONS. To succeed in this task I need your help. Prizes are being offered for the best groups of ten illustrations submitted to me. The response so far has been most encouraging. Not only is there a manifest interest in the prize contest, but there is also an intense enthusiasm for the improvement of preaching by the use of a higher type of sermon illustrations. Many prominent ministers who do not wish to compete for the prizes are nevertheless contributing two or three of their most effective illustrations, simply to cooperate in this timely and worthwhile project. Not only has the material been of a consistently high standard, but the form of its presentation has made the editor's work most enjoyable and has helped to visualize the kind of book YOU want.

I assure you that this Encyclopedia will illuminate the central doctrines of the Christian faith--God, Christ, the Incarnation, the Cross, Resurrection, Immortality, the Church, the Bible--and every aspect of practical Christian living and service. Illustrations from science, from social, racial and economic fields, from missions will be presented. Illustrations throwing new light on Bible texts, from either standard or new translations, will find prominent place in the book. It is my purpose to make this book a treasury of illustrations for great expository preaching.

I hope that each reader of the Pulpit will enter the prize contest, but whether you do or not, I will greatly appreciate your help in producing a book of modern illustrations which will greatly enrich your preaching.

Sincerely yours,

Stanley I. Stuber

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4. All illustrations received are to be considered available for inclusion in the Encyclopedia, whether they earn prizes or not.
5. Your *group of ten illustrations* should be mailed, early as possible, to Rev. Stanley I. Stuber, First Baptist Church, Clifton Springs, N. Y.

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